(c) whether this assistance was to be withdrawn in the last year but has been extended further on the request of NDDB; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor and the period for which this assistance will continue as per the latest arrangement?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI RAGHUVANS PRASAD SINGH) : (a) and (b) The National Dairy Development Board has been receiving commodity assistance from the European Economic Community (EEC) by way of funding Operation Flood Phase II and III. Yearwise quantities of skimmed milk powder (SMP) and butter fat received are as follows :

Quantity (MT)

Period	SMP	Butter Oil	Butter
1978-79	6956	3451	NIL
1979-80	28216	9713	1282
1980-81	13531	9373	850
1981-82	73644	14035	3967
1982-83	37573	9331	3457
1983-84	7695	599	600
1984-85	48969	15859	6421
1985-86	9516	2813	3492
1986-87	5859	344	800
1987-88	22000	3032	6059
1988-89	17990	NIL	7314
1989-90	14991	NIL	NIL
1990-91	NIL	NIL	NIL
1991-92	NIL	NIL	NIL
1992-93	11994	NIL	NIL
1993-94	3000	NIL	NIL

No commodity assistance has been received after 1993-94.

(c) and (d) No Sir. Not only was the commodity assistance not extended but was prematurely terminated after 1993-94 as the EEC felt that India was no longer entitled for commodity assistance.

[Translation]

Increase in Sugar Price

1669. PROF. PREM SINGH CHANDUMAJRA :
SHRI NITISH KUMAR :

Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government had already taken a decision to increase the prices of sugar but its public announcement was made on February 10, 1997;

(b) if so, the date on which this decision was taken and the reasons for the delay in the announcement made in this regard;

(c) whether the Government have estimated the loss incurred due to delay in announcement even after taking the decision; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV) : (a) and (b) In consultation with the Ministry of Finance, a decision was taken on 7.2.1997 to notify on 8.2.1997 the increase in issue price of levy sugar to Rs. 10.50 per kg, so as to be effective from 10.2.1997. The time between the notification and effective date was given to enable the states to do the physical verification of stocks. The notification itself was issued on 8.2.1997, as decided.

(c) and (d) Does not arise.

[English]

Smuggling of Herbs

1670. SHRI RAJKESHAR SINGH :
PROF. OM PAL SINGH 'NIDAR' :

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether cases of large scale smuggling and unscientific exploitation of the herbs possessing important medicinal values, once found in abundance in the hilly regions in the country, have come to the notice of the Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the remedial steps taken by the Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN